

this particular work. It will be remembered that he had first intended to make the Rougon-Macquart series one of eight volumes only. Next, he had decided on twelve, to which figure he had adhered until the time of "L'Assommoir." But plenty of characters for additional volumes figured on the leaves of the genealogical tree which he had long since prepared,<sup>1</sup> and now that success had come he felt that he might extend his series. "Nana" was its ninth volume, and he resolved to add eleven more. "La Joie de Yivre" having been put aside, he was thinking of what subject he might take in hand when, in the course of his "Figaro" campaign, he had occasion to write an article on "Adultery in the Middle Class." The idea that this was the great evil preying on the *bourgeoisie* seized hold of him, and he began to prepare the book which he called "Pot-Bouille," a title which might be Englished, perhaps, as "The Stockpot," and which signifies every-day *cuisine* and by extension every-day life. Some of the incidents that he wove into this work had come under his personal observation, others were suggested by friends, some of whom also collected special information which he needed, Huysmans, for instance, supplying notes about the church of St. Roch, and Ceard inquiring into diocesan architects, government

clerks, judges,  
and others, their earnings, their duties, their  
pensions, and  
so forth.<sup>2</sup>

Begun at Me"dan, continued at G-randcamp  
on the  
Norman coast, whither Zola betook himself  
during the

<sup>1</sup> He had shown it at a very early stage to his friends  
Huysmans and  
Ceard, and the former has recorded how greatly they "were  
amazed by it.  
("Le Matin," September 30, 1902.)

<sup>3</sup> Sherard (*l. c.*, 188 *et seq*) gives a variety of information  
on these points  
taken from Zola's letters to a friend whose name does not  
appear.